Listing of Claims

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (previously presented):   A method of providing access to a candidate's personal background data, wherein the data have been verified, the method comprising:

        a.   establishing a data record relating to the candidate's personal background data, in a digital storage medium, the data record having a candidate identifier that identifies the candidate and including

                (i)   a set of components based on information supplied by the candidate, each component being potentially verifiable, and

                (ii)   a corresponding set of query results obtained at a first time, the corresponding set including, with respect to each component, the result of a verification query to a third party;

        b.   communicating the candidate identifier to the candidate;

        c.   receiving after the first time, over a communication network, the candidate identifier from an outside user wanting verification of the candidate's personal background data, the outside user having received the candidate identifier directly or indirectly from the candidate; and

        d.   distributing, to the outside user, over the communication network, in response to receiving the candidate identifier, an electronic document including the data record and an electronic authentication of the contents of the data record, the electronic authentication capable of revealing unauthorized modifications of the contents of the data record.

Claim 2 (original):   A method according to claim 1, wherein establishing the data record includes:

        a.   from a computer at a first location, separately specifying over a network to a host computer a set of components of the candidate's personal background data, each component being potentially verifiable by contacting a third party;

        b.   storing, in a digital storage medium in communication with the host computer, the set of components;

        c.   for each component of the set,

   identifying a relevant third party and pertinent contact information therefor;

   communicating a query to the relevant third party to verify the component, and

   obtaining a query result from the query; and

   associating the query result with the component and storing the query result in the

storage medium.

Claim 3 (original): A method according to claim 2, wherein specifying the set of components

includes providing responses via a set of templates, the set of templates having at least one

member and being structured to evince the content of the set of components.

Claim 4 (original): A method according to claim 2, wherein specifying the set of components

is performed over the Internet.

Claim 5 (original): A method according to claim 4, in which obtaining a query result from the

query is performed over the Internet.

Claim 6 (original): A method according to claim 4, wherein specifying the set of components

includes specifying the set of components to a World Wide Web server.

Claim 7 (original): A method according to claim 6, in which communicating a query to the

relevant third party to verify the component is performed over the Internet.

Claim 8 (original): A method according to claim 7, wherein communicating a query to the

relevant third party to verify the component is performed automatically and includes sending the

query as E-Mail.

Claim 9 (original): A method according to claim 1, in which communicating the identifier to

the candidate is performed over the Internet.

Claim 10 (original): A method according to claim 9, wherein communicating the identifier to the candidate is performed automatically and includes sending the identifier as E-Mail over the Internet.

Claim 11 (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the electronic document is distributed in the form of an electronic mail message.

Claim 12 (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the electronic document is distributed in the form of an electronic file.

Claim 13 (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the electronic authentication is an electronic watermark.

Claim 14 (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the electronic authentication is an electronic certification.

Claim 15 (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the set of components includes the candidate's résumé information, and wherein the set of query results includes information verifying the candidate's résumé information.

Claim 16 (previously presented): A system for providing access to a candidate's personal background data, wherein the data have been verified, the system comprising:

(a) a storage arrangement on which is stored a database having a plurality of data records, each data record relating to personal background data of a candidate, each data record having a candidate identifier that identifies the candidate and that is communicated to the candidate, each data record including

(i) a set of components based on information supplied by a candidate, each component being potentially verifiable, and

(ii) a corresponding set of query results obtained at a first time, the corresponding set including, with respect to each component, the result of a verification query to a third party; and

(b) a process, running on a computer in communication with the storage arrangement, for selectively distributing, to an authorized person presenting an identifier received directly or indirectly from the candidate, in response to receiving the identifier after the first time, over a communication network, an electronic document including the candidate's data record and an electronic authentication of the contents of the data record, the electronic authentication capable of revealing unauthorized modifications of the contents of the data record.

Claims 17 – 56 (canceled).